



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY TO PROVIDE 1,500 MORE CHILD CAR SEATS ***"Keep 'Em Safe" Program Extended through Sept. 2011***

Another 1,500 children will be safer when riding in vehicles thanks to a new \$200,000 grant the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) has received from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS).

The "Keep 'Em Safe" program aims to improve child safety by offering vehicle protection education and providing child car seats to low-income families. Funding for the program comes from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"The County is committed to improving the safety and wellbeing of children," said Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price, San Diego County Board of Supervisors. "The child car seats will help save lives and reduce injuries during a crash."

This is the second OTS grant HHSA has received for the "Keep 'Em Safe" program, which is administered by HHSA's local partner, the Pacific Safety Council. Last year, HHSA received a \$207,000 grant which allowed the Council to distribute 2,000 child car seats and conduct 132 safety presentations throughout the county.

With the new grant, the Pacific Safety Council will extend the program through September 2011. In addition to providing the car seats to low-income families, staff will conduct 90 safety education classes and 40 child passenger safety check-up events, as well as five, one-day classes on passenger safety for public safety workers.

"The proper use of child safety seats, booster seats and buckling up will save children's lives," said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety. "Doing it right every trip, every day, will make it a habit they will carry into adulthood."

The goal of this grant is to increase the proper installation and appropriate use of child passenger safety seats and seat belt usage by families.

"By using age-appropriate, vehicle safety seats, parents and caregivers can make a lifesaving difference," said HHSA Director Nick Macchione. "Children should always be appropriately secured."

For more information about the "Keep 'Em Safe" program, contact Noemi Dueñas at Pacific Safety Council at (858) 621-2313 ext. 114.

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